

U.S. Department of Justice



Federal Bureau of Investigation
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JAN 24 2000

✓ Subject of Request: File 62-5
Serial 7437

FOIPA No. 908575 /190- HQ-1250810

Dear Requester:

Enclosed are copies of documents from FBI records. Excisions have been made to protect information exempt from disclosure pursuant to Title 5, United States Code, Section 552 (Freedom of Information Act) and/or Section 552a (Privacy Act). In addition, where excisions were made, the appropriate exempting subsections have been cited opposite the deletions. Where pages have been withheld in their entirety, a deleted page information sheet has been substituted showing the reasons or basis for the deletion. The subsections cited for withholding information from the enclosed documents are marked below:

Section 552

Section 552a

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| ☐ (b)(1) | ☐ (b)(7)(A) | ☐ (d)(5) |
| ☐ (b)(2) | ☐ (b)(7)(B) | ☐ (j)(2) |
| ☐ (b)(3) _____ | ☒ (b)(7)(C) | ☐ (k)(1) |
| _____ | ☐ (b)(7)(D) | ☐ (k)(2) |
| _____ | ☐ (b)(7)(E) | ☐ (k)(3) |
| _____ | ☐ (b)(7)(F) | ☐ (k)(4) |
| ☐ (b)(4) | ☐ (b)(8) | ☐ (k)(5) |
| ☐ (b)(5) | ☐ (b)(9) | ☐ (k)(6) |
| ☐ (b)(6) | | ☐ (k)(7) |

(See Form OPCA-16a, enclosed, for an explanation of these exemptions.)

Pursuant to your request, 6 pages(s) were reviewed and 6 page(s) are being released.

During the review of material pertinent to the subject of your request, documents were located which

- ☐ originated with another Government agency(ies).
These documents were referred to that agency(ies) for review and direct response to you.
- ☐ contain information furnished by another Government agency(ies). You will be advised by the FBI as to the releasability of this information following our consultation with the other agency(ies).

Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts

SUBJECT FILE 62-5 SERIAL 7437

FILE NUMBER 62-5



Federal Bureau of Investigation

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

February 20, 1961

DIRECTOR, FBI

Name Checks

LEANDER PEREZ, SR.

- 1 - Mr. Rosen
- 1 - Mr. CA Evans
- 1 - Name Check Section
- 1 - [REDACTED]

b7c

[REDACTED] of your staff on February 13, 1961, requested a name check concerning Leander Perez, Sr., District Attorney, Plaquemine Parish, Louisiana.

At the request of the Criminal Division and the United States Attorney in the Eastern District of Louisiana, a full investigation was made into the allegation that Mr. Leander Perez, Sr., on December 11, 1954, had disrupted a catechism class at Belle Chasse, Louisiana, and had forced Negro children to walk at the rear of the line of march from the classroom to the church. Mr. Perez also allegedly on April 16, 1955, ordered colored children out of the church and allegedly cursed the priest.

Results of this investigation were furnished in the form of reports entitled "Leander Perez, Sr., Victim: Civil Rights," which reports were dated at New Orleans, Louisiana, December 15, 1955, and February 3, 1956. Copies of these reports were furnished to former Assistant Attorney General Warren Olney III on December 19, 1955, and February 7, 1956, respectively.

On January 30, 1956, Mr. Perez was interviewed in his office in New Orleans by Special Agents of our New Orleans Office. He was extremely critical of the entire Federal Government. With regard to the United States Supreme Court, he stated it was attempting to foster the communist-inspired doctrine of various left-wing writers and legal authorities on the peoples of the various states and attempting to force integration upon the citizens of the United States. The results of this interview were furnished by letter dated February 10, 1956, to former Assistant Attorney General Olney. (44-9732)

On December 9, 1959, [REDACTED] Braithwaite, Louisiana, and three other individuals residing in Plaquemine Parish, Louisiana, were referred to this Bureau's New Orleans Office by the United States Attorney.

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COMM-FBI

- Tolson
- Belmont
- Mohr
- DeLoach
- Callahan
- Conrad
- Evans
- Malone
- Rosen
- Tavel
- Trotter
- W.C. Sullivan
- Tele. Room
- Ingram
- Gandy

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WFW: [REDACTED]
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MAIL ROOM ☐ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

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The Attorney General

All identified themselves as political opponents of Mr. Perez. These individuals reported that in connection with the Democratic primary election held on December 5, 1959, for state and local offices, numerous persons in Plaquemine Parish were persuaded to vote absentee ballots in support of candidates backed by Mr. Perez. The purpose was to permit deputy clerks at polling places to observe that voters were casting ballots for Mr. Perez's candidates. Complainants stated many persons so voting were doing so in fear of losing jobs or were under other forms of pressure from Mr. Perez and his associates and were thereby deprived of their civil rights.

Based on these allegations, an investigation was conducted and the results were furnished to the Civil Rights Division on December 21, 1959, in the form of a report written at New Orleans, Louisiana, December 15, 1959, entitled "Leander Perez, Sr., District Attorney, Plaquemine Parish, Louisiana; Civil Rights, Election Laws." (44-15206)

In addition to the afore-mentioned investigations, this Bureau's files reveal that in June, 1948, Mr. Perez was interviewed in connection with an investigation being conducted at that time entitled "Discrimination Against Negro Voters, Louisiana Primary Elections, Civil Rights and Domestic Violence." During the interview, Mr. Perez punctuated his answers to the questions of Special Agents with profane criticism and name calling of then Attorney General Thomas C. Clark, former President Harry S. Truman and other Washington officials. He stated that in his opinion the Washington officials of whom he spoke were not true Democrats, were pushing the country into something approximating the "isms" of Europe, were interfering with problems which were primarily those of the various states, and were taking upon themselves rights which were inherent in these states, such as interference in election laws and the confiscation of state tidelands. (44-2016-10)

Additional information in this Bureau's files indicates that the Baton Rouge, Louisiana, "Morning Advocate" newspaper of August 26, 1955, contained the following article:

The Attorney General

"District Attorney Leander Perez said tonight the people have a right to ask Congress to impeach Supreme Court justices for 'changing our Constitution' with the school segregation decision.

"The Southern Louisianian, outspoken Supreme Court critic and arch foe of mixing Negro and white pupils, said the court has turned over to the NAACP every Federal District Court in Dixie.

"Perez said if Supreme Court justices ever are impeached, 'I hope I'm there to cross-examine them.'

"The District Attorney of Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes, south of New Orleans, spoke to some 400 persons at a public session of the Southern Gentlemen chapter in this St. Helena Parish town.

"The white group is expanding in rural Southeast Louisiana to maintain racial segregation.

"Perez warned the NAACP is organized in the South, but the white people are not.

"'Democrats and Republicans alike are competing for the Negro vote in New York, Philadelphia and Chicago,' he said 'How low can people stoop for selfish political purposes?'

"'I don't think the American people are going to take it and they don't have to take it -- but they have to be aroused and organized.

"'The Supreme Court is powerful as long as it sits up there and gets away with it,' Perez added.

"The one time national director of the States Rights movement referred to news reports that the NAACP has filed a lawsuit against New Orleans schools to challenge constitutionality of the state's school segregation laws.

"'The NAACP struck at New Orleans because that big city is just not organized,' he contended.

The Attorney General

"What are the mayor and the city council of New Orleans doing to protect white children from racial integration?

"Public officials there are going to Negro catfish fries. If your politicians are color blind, don't have any truck with them."

"In New Orleans, he insisted, 'police have formed shotgun squads because of increased Negro assaults on white women.'" (105-38567)

In February, 1959, a confidential informant, who has furnished reliable information in the past, advised that a report on a recent public meeting of the Capital Citizens Council, Little Rock, Arkansas, revealed that Judge Leander Perez of New Orleans had donated one thousand dollars to the Little Rock Private School Corporation. (44-12284-2057)

The "Birmingham News," Birmingham, Alabama, of April 30, 1959, in an article entitled "Negroid South is seen as aim of integration" mentioned that a Louisiana district attorney had declared that the social aim of the drive for racial integration is a Negroid South. This declaration was attributed to Mr. Perez who also said that southern people would never surrender to this. According to the article, he told a House Judiciary Subcommittee, "The whole drive for racial integration is political. The drive is for social equality, not for educational opportunities (for Negroes)." (62-101087-21-A)

The Washington Capital News Service in a release dated May 21, 1959, mentioned that Mr. Perez, New Orleans attorney and states rights leader, had attacked the administration's package of proposed civil rights laws as unconstitutional and communist inspired. This release indicated that Mr. Perez had told the Senate Constitutional Rights Subcommittee that, "The use of Federal coercive power to force racial integration upon an unwilling free people can only result in tragic consequences." Mr. Perez declared that as a result of the 1954 school desegregation ruling by the Supreme Court "race relations have been aggravated and worsened in the South and all over the country." He said, "The American people cannot accept forced racial integration for their children or for themselves." (62-101087-21-A)

The Attorney General

On July 22, 1960, an informant, who has furnished reliable information in the past, advised that he had attended the \$25-a-plate Citizens Council banquet held on the evening of July 21, 1960, at the Edgewater Gulf Hotel, Edgewater Park, Mississippi. This informant advised that those present at the banquet were Citizens Council representatives from the States of Louisiana, Texas, Florida, Alabama and Mississippi. The informant stated that Mr. Perez was the featured speaker at the banquet.

The "Jackson Daily News," Jackson, Mississippi, of July 22, 1960, contained an article entitled "'White Unity for White Beaches' Urged on Coast" in which it was mentioned that a New Orleans constitutional lawyer and political kingmaker had denounced as "traitors to their country" the authors and supporters of the Democratic Party platform and called for a bloc of free southern electoral votes to "repudiate the Communist manifesto represented by the Democratic platform." These comments were made by Mr. Perez in a talk at a \$25-a-plate Gulf Coast leadership dinner of the Citizens Council. Additionally, Mr. Perez commented concerning the Democratic platform, "We might as well call it a Communist indoctrination course - or, more appropriate still, it might be called a Congolese constitution to legalize assault and violence by the blacks and the whites backed up by the coercent power of the federal government to destroy the peace and security and the liberties and freedom of our people. This platform could make a myth of our basic American heritage of freedom of choice." (157-6-33)

In October, 1960, an informant, who has furnished reliable information in the past, advised that the Board of Directors of the Capital Citizens Council, Little Rock, Arkansas, held a meeting on the night of October 10, 1960, for the purpose of discussing a public meeting which the Council would sponsor in Little Rock on October 20, 1960. The informant advised that an announcement was made at the meeting of the Board of Directors that should the public meeting be held, Mr. Perez of New Orleans would talk in favor of proposed Amendment 52 to the Arkansas State Constitution to be voted on in November, 1960. This amendment makes provision for the closing of public schools by elections, the transfer of funds for students displaced by closed schools, and related matters. (105-69492-9)

The Attorney General

The "Shreveport Journal," Shreveport, Louisiana, of December 6, 1960, in an article entitled "Perez Is Planning Full-Time Battle Against Integration" mentioned that Mr. Perez looked forward to waging a full-time battle against integration after being compared to Abraham Lincoln, emancipator of Negroes Perez calls "Congolese." The article stated, "The white-maned Perez officially retired as St. Bernard - Plaquemines Parish District Attorney Monday night with a testimonial dinner. His son replaces him in the post." (157-4-33-A)